

THE
Vnfortunate Mother:
A
TRAGEDIE.

Never acted; but set downe
according to the intention
of the Author



Thomas Nabbes.

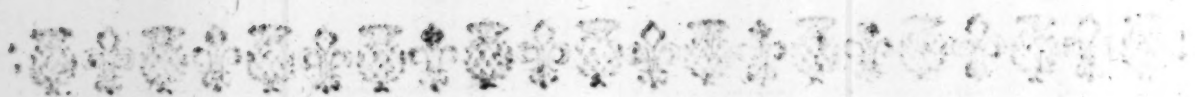


LONDON:

Printed by J. O. for Daniell Frere, and
are to be sold at the Signe of the Red Bull
in Little Britaine. 1640.

THE
UNFORTUNATE MOTHER:
A
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Thomas Nipper.



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TO
THE RIGHT
WORSHIPFULL
Richard Braithwaite
ESQUIRE.

Sir,



Have (though boldly
being a stranger) elected
you, to countenance a
piece, that (undeserved-
ly I hope) hath beene de-
nied the credit which it might have
gain'd from the Stage; though I can

A 2

accuse

The Epistle Dedicatory.

accuse my selfe of no error in it, more
than a nice curiosity (which notwith-
standing I must boast to be without pre-
sident) in the method; where I have de-
nied my selfe much liberty, that may be
allow'd a Poet from old example, and
new establishd custome. Your selfe have
given many sufficient testimonies of
your owne abilities and judgement, by
your owne many published and un-
questionable labours. In giving way and
pardon to this bold act of mine, you
will engage to thankfulnessse, & honour
him that is ambitious to be knowne by
you, and still

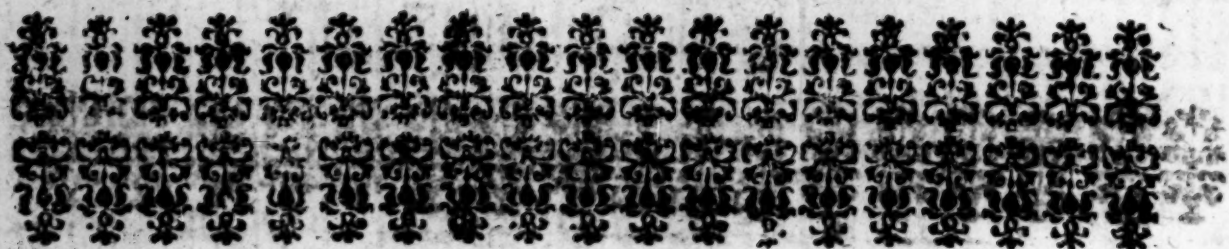
Your bearer and humble
Servant,

Thomas Nabbes.

Proeme To the Reader.

R Eader, thou wilt undoe my Poemes fate
If thy opinion be prejudicate:
If not, then I shall neither hope nor feare,
Whether thou wilt be partiall or severe.
But 'cause I know not how thou art inclin'd,
Ile tell thee what shalt not, and what shalt find.
Here are no bumbast raptures swelling high,
To plucke *Love* and the rest downe from the sky.
Here is no fence that must by thee be scam'd,
Before thou canst the meaning understand.
Here is not any glorious Scene of state,
Nor Christning set out with the Lottery Plate.
There's no disguise in't; no false beard, that can
Discover severall persons in one man.
No Politician tells his plots unto
Those in the Pit, and what he meanes to doe.
But now me thinkes I heare some Criticke say,
All these left out there's nothing in the play.
Yes, Thou shalt find plaine words, and language cleane
That *Cochran* needs not tell thee what they mean.
Shalt find strict method in't, and every part
Severely order'd by the rules of Art.
A constant Scene: the businesse it intends
The two houres rime of action comprehends.
Read it with observation then, and be
My Judge from reason; not from tyranny.

Thine Thomas Mabbet.



To

The Author on this his

TRAGEDY.

Printed before 'tis *Added! such a trick*

As few men will judge to be politicke,

But little reason for it wee can see,

Profit should grow contemptible with thee.

I read it, and it hath my vote for good;

Sure 'twas not by some others understood:

By whom I wish action might added be,

For that's the best life of a Tragedy.

Sure though they tyrant like did sentence give

Upon thy Mother, she deserves to live.

E. B.



To the Author on his *Unfortunate*

MOTHER.

I Doe not wonder that great *Johnsons* Play

Was scorn'd so by the ignorant, that day

It did appeare in its most glorious shine;

And comely action grac'd each learned line.

There

There was some reason for it : 'twas above
 Their reach, their envy, their applause or love :
 When as the wiser few did it admire,
 And warm'd their fancies at his genuine fire,
 But I commend the wisdom of thy Fate,
 To sell thy labours at a better rate,
 Then the contempt of the most squeamish age :
 Or the exactest Rosci of the Stage :
 Which might provoke our Laureat to repine,
 That thine should rivall his brave *Albovine*.
 Thy Muse in this birth doth unhappy prove,
 In that it is abortive. Let thy love
 Appear to us in getting such another,
 That she may boast her selfe a happy Mother.



To my friend the Author.

Well writ ; well plotted : why not acted then ?
 Have th' actors judgement more then other men ?
 Or ist their humour so to keepe those under,
 Whose bayes are knowne to be secure from thunder ?
 Since all the world I dare be bold will say,
 Folly was guide when iudgement lost its way :
 Yet each good wit to thee a sprig will bring,
 To crowne thy Muse that doth so sweetly sing :
 Whilst others weaknesse ordering thy sad fate,
 Hath made themselves like her ; Unfortunate.

R. W.

The Persons.

Macario. A yong Duke of Ferrara.
 Infelici. Dutchesse Dowager.
 Corvino. Supposed Father to *Spurio* and *Notho*.
 Bonardo. Father to *Fidelio* and *Amanda*.
Spurio. Favourite to the Duke.
Notho. General returned victorious.
Fidelio. Friend to *Spurio*, and lover of *Melissa*.
 Beneventi. Friend to *Fidelio*.
 Vittorio. }
 Polemici. } Two Captaines, friends to *Notho*.
 Melissa. Daughter to *Corvino*.
 Amanda. In love with *Spurio*.
 Cardente. An old Grone, mother of the maides.

Ladies attendants.

The Guard.

The Scene the Court of Ferrara.

The



THE
Vnfortunate Mother.
A Tragedy.

The first Act, and first Scene.

The Scene being the Presence,

Fidelio and Beneventi.

Beneventi.

Our Mourning's ended, and the Court again
Looks like the Morning, when the Easterne Ayre
Is painted with a mixture of her blushes,
And the Sun golden glory.

Fid. So it should:

Great Princes Death's shot like a short Eclipse
Darken the Orbes they lighted, till another
Spreads his succeeding beames: We have his sonne,
As full of hope as ever promis'd state
A happinesse; and now he's risen, we

B

Shall

The Vnfortunate Mother.

Shall gaze, and glad our selves as cheerefully
In his warme favours, as in those, which time
So lately dispossest us of.

Ben. I shall not
Court them with any flattery.

Fid. His temper
Is veruious, *Benedenti*; He'le admit
Of no such practice; and his minion too,
The noble *Spurio*, such a rare example
Of a good great man.

Ben. That's your partiality,
Because he is your friend.

Fid. Wrong not th integrity
Of what is reall in me. By my hopes
Of a faire memory, there's not a charme
In greatnesse hath the Magicke power to sway
My reason with affection, but true merit,
That bindes me. I ne're coucht unto the humours
Of any great one yet; or stil'd my selfe
Th'admirer of his vertues, if they were not
The true steps to his rising.

Ben. Sure the Dutchesse
Affects him with a more than common favour;
As if there were some secret interest
That yet scapes publick knowledge.

Fid. Be not jealous
'Tis the rude peoples vice. In our pure difference
There should be nobler thoughts.

Ben. You love his sister.

Fid. Yes *Benedenti*; can my wishes covet
A greater? but I would to mixt with a shew boy.

Ben. Here's your friend, the favourite: Enter *Spurio*.
He'le pay his sisters portion in some Office
Beg'd of the Duke; and with the Dowry, which
His Father gives her, buy himselfe sweet pleasures;
Or a new glorious ward-robe. How he flatters
As if some frownes of the new Duke dejected him,
And made him feare a fall.

Fid.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Fid. Th'art too severe
And Cynicall. This bitterness might move
Another spleene: but prethee *Beneventi*
Doe not presume on priviledge. A friend
Shares so much of my selfe, he cannot suffer,
But I am sensible by a consent
And an affinity of parts.

Ben. Ile honour him
At your commands.

Fid. My honour'd Lord why thus? *(To Spurio.)*

Spu. *Fidelio*, welcome to mine eyes; thy presence,
Like Sun-shine, hath illuminated my darke soule,
Clouded with melancholy.

Fid. What's the cause?
You flow in honours.

Spu. Oh *Fidelio*,
Be not too curious: shouldst thou know my sufferings,
Thy Physicke cannot cure them. *Beneventi*!

Fid. My friend, my Lord.

Spu. Then mine. My friends must be *(To Beneventi.)*
Like Chaines, the first linke leads on his dependants.
Instruct me how, then use me.

Ben. I shall study
A gratefull service.

Fid. Pray doe not conceale
What's your disturbance. By communicating
You'll lessen something of the suffering,
In making me partaker.

Spur. I shall adde to't.
We shall be like two neighbour buildings, when
A flame proceeding from the one hath seiz'd
The others rooffe, it makes the burning greater.
Friend let me suffer, be thou free.

Fid. Report,
Perhaps, hath multiply'd and rumour's growne
Pregnant wth this issue, that your noble brother
Wants the successe we hop't for.

Spu. Ha! my Brother!

B 2 *My*

The Unfortunate Mother.

My brothers vertue doth command his Fortune;
The later waites upon the first, as slaves
Act their Directors wills. No my *Fidello*,
A certaine knowledge newly's come to Court
Of his sure victory, and his arrivall
Is suddenly expected, that it may
Crowne this dayes (yet unperfect) glory. *Friend*,
My joyes transport me, that I share in blood
With one so worthy: But the peace that waites
Vpon his Conquest cannot stay the warre
That is within me.

Fid. Here's the Duke and Dutchesse,
Compose your selfe.

Maca. Griefe, Madam, should be like
A short Sea-storme; 'soon as a calmer ayre
Hath smooth'd the rugged waters, there's not scene
The least impression which the formers rage
Made on their even surface. I am still
Your sonne in duty, as in blood; And though
I share not in this outward act of sorrow
For my dead Father (since the mourning ceremonies
Of Court should be prescrib'd to stricter limits
Of time, than where th'affaires and men are private)
His memory presents it selfe as fresh
To every apprehension that assailes me,
As when his living precepts taught me how
To be a Prince, by more than the election
Of Fortune and my Birth: His vertues shall
Be (as I hope) my soules inheritance,
Well as his dignities: He be directed
By their examples.

Inf. Deare sonne (for my love
Bids me make use of Natures priviledge,
And leave out other titles) I have joyes
Greater within me, than those weake ones, which
Onely take life from the expression,
And quickly dye, the object once remov'd.
Yet give me leave to temper them with mixture
Of some sad thoughts, lest their excessse may grow

Into

The Unfortunate Mother.

Into a danger, and a little taste
Of contrarieties will whet the sence
With a fresh appetite, preventing surfeits.
My comforts swell, like a full tide, to see
Thy growing state propt up with such advantages,
As show it unto all mens expectations
Int's future flourishing: A Counsaile grave
And wise as ever order'd policy
From the best unresisted principles:
Men, whose designs set downe the acts succeſse
As positive as Oracles. Thy *Spurio*,
Thy almost selfe; a man so rich in soule,
And all her best dependancies, he gives
Honour to greatnesse, by the noblest using
Of a Court-favourites power, that ever yet
Deserv'd a record. Next to him, thy Champion,
His valiant brother; one, upon whose Plumes
Victory danceth as they faine the ayre,
Whispering the voyce of Triumph. Thou art guarded
With such a generall loyalty in Subjects,
That if thou slep'st amongst the multitude,
Even when some rage possesse them, undefended
With any Armes but that, th' imperfect slumber
Need not be broken with a feare. *Macario*,
These teares are teares of joy: and yet I cannot
Chuse but reflect upon those times that gave me
Th' embraces of thy Noble Father.

Mac. Madam,
The losse you suffer is repair'd in me;
Ile owne no honours, nor delights of earth,
But what my duty shall conferre on you:
Making your present greatnesse equall to
The former without discontinuance:
I will call nothing mine, more than a title,
And ceremonious out-side.

Cor. Would you'ld please
To take your seat, and give an audience
To what I shall deliver.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Mac. Speake *Corvino*.

Your Oratory hath power to draw attention,
What e're the subject be.

Cor. 'Tis that that makes
Language harmonious. 'Tis your selfe, great sir,
Both your owne private and the publicke good
Must be my Theame. In part it likewise hath
Relation unto your eternity,
For Princes never dye that have faire issue.
Your marriage sir.

Mac. I'me yet too yong, *Corvino*.

Cor. Y'are old in judgement, and in all the parts
That make a Prince up absolute. Too yong
Some carefull Parents (and such providence
Might be a good example) in the child-hood
Of their lov'd sonnes, have made election
Of hopefull beauties, that they might be sure
To keepe their names alive in their posterity.
You are mature enough : now therefore know,
Your dying Father (to whose memory
We owe a reverence) when his fainting Spirits
Labour'd for helpe from all their weakned Organs,
He breath'd these last words : Let my Sonne (quoth he)
Marry betimes ; and if he makes his choyce
Mongst his owne subjects, let him place *Melissa*
In his first thoughts.

Ben. Where is your honour now ? (To *Fideli* privately.)

Cor. I doe not urge it as she is my daughter,
Through an ambition that affects such greatnesse :
Sir, my desires are humble ; and on those
A safety waites, whose comfort Ile not lose
For all the others flatteries.

Mac. Blush not Lady.
If Fortune hath design'd you for a Princess, *To Melissa.*
The favour's worth the courting with a smile,
And cheerefull aspect, so't transport you not
From a becomming duty.

Mel. Gracious Sir,

My

The Unfortunate Mother.

My temper can admit of no desires *(Kneels.)*
Suit not with my condition. If it be
Decreed by providence, I can obey,
But never wish.

Mac. Rise lovely maid. *(Rises.)*

Fid. My Lord, *(To Spurio in private.)*
I'me lost to all the happinesse that ever
My hopes shew'd me a way to.

Spu. Have no feares :
She's constant ; and Ile soon divert the Duke,
Even here in publicke.

Mac. Faire Melissa take
Thy Princes grant.

Spu. Of what sir ? Doe not mocke
Your reason into error. Y'are a Prince
And every act of yours concernes a state,
Not your meere person onely : what you doe
Must therefore deeply be consider'd on,
Before your will allow it execution. Princes
Should wed with Princesse : where there is
An innate Majesty on both sides, that
Well mixt, makes up an issue fit for rule,
And the successive dignities. Besides,
A State is strengthened by alliance much :
It may enlarge your Territories to,
By times kind working. We have neighbour Princes,
That gladly would bestow their Female heires
Upon your highnesse, and by such a choyse,
Your subjects with your selfe might gaine a happinesse.

Mac. You, *Spurio*, counsaile this ?

Spu. He cannot owne
A duty worth your cherishing with favour,
That will not urge it home.

Mac. She is your sister ;
And 'twould be some additions to your honours
(Though they are many which your merits challenge)
To see your sister grace with the high Title
Of our great Dutchesse.

Spu.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Spn. I would be disadvantage
To all that's good within me: For although
No policy preserves my Actions
Free from suspicion, but their owne integrity,
And that hath shew'd them cleare without abuse
Of favour or of power; yet if I were
The brother of the Dutchesse, I should hardly
Scape envy, where I now have love.

Mac. Brave spirit,
Thy vertue moves me.

Ben. How his father frownes?
He's mov'd another way.

Spn. If you esteeme it
A vertue in me to suppress desires
That beare me higher than the moderate pitch,
Cherish it still, and doe not with addition
Of favours make me lose th'opinion
Of being good in my prosperities:
Such flatteries may tempt me to aspire;
My flight holds even yet.

Mac. My dearest *Spurio*,
How thou appear'st in this humility
Nor doe I think it any counterfeit
To whet my yet cold appetite. Her forme,
Though it be full of active fire, enough
To move the dullest earth, wherein a soule
Hath made its habitation, I not doate on:
Nor will it prejudice your worth *Melisse*,
In that your Prince reuleth you: Affection
Must not guide us, but counsaile.

Mel. You have done
A justice unto me and your owne honour:
I shall be happy when my Virgin freedome
May make an equall choise.

Mac. That choise shall want
No honour we can give it. And deare Madam
Your selfe have youth enough and beauty yet
T'admit a second fellowship: Elect

Even

The Unfortunate Mother.

Even where you please, our duty shall allow it :
Vertue and judgement guide you.

Infe. I am happy in my unhappinesse, that time hath left me
A husband still ; thy Fathers memory
Preserv'd in thee my Son : I know no widow-hood
Whilst wedded unto that.

Mac. Yet if hereafter
You would at any time conferre such honour,
Let it be Lord *Corvino*.

Spu. Ha ! my father !
Nam'd he not him *Fidelio* ?

To Fidelio privately.

Corv. To my selfe
You shew me my defects, by the faire light
Of your too gracious and too great opinion ;
All the desert that I can have, must be
Of your creating.

Flourish.

Mac. These events shall be
Referr'd to time and providence

Exeunt Mac. Infe.

Corv. Sonne *Spurio*.

Ladies, the rest remaining.

Ben. Now will he schoole his Son for being honest.
'Tis an ambitious Lord, yet strives to hide it
With politique hypocrisie.

*To Fidelio
whispering.*

Corv. Your Child-hood
Grew up to riper yeares in such obedience,
As promis'd duty to me ; how you should
Decline that goodnesse from the hopes conceiv'd
Strikes me with wonder. Sure you were instructed,
And taught to know men by the study of
Their difference ; and in what one may excell
Anothers being : Greatnesse is no vice
That you should shun it, and your Sisters honours
Would neither have impair'd yours, nor mine :
'Tis not so dangerous caring to preserve
Aboundance, as to labour with necessity ;
And though it might be reall temperance in you
To shun so great additions, yet it shew'd
Little obedience that you contradicted
What I propos'd.

C

Spu.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Spn. Sir 'twas from your example,
You urg'd it not as an ambition;
If your desires were humble, mine were so:
I preferre safety fir as well as you,
Before the flattering dangers that are incident
To th'other.

Corn. You have mis-interpreted
A modest feare, an absolute deniall.
Besides; how unbecomming 'tis t' accept
A prest consent with greedinesse; it argues
Desire without desert: but since you are
So nicely morall, by my selfe I will
Advance my selfe. The Dutchesse bed will be
An honour I ne're thought of.

Spn. How sir! you
Marry the Dutchesse?

Corn. Hath your greatnesse taught you
To practise scorne on me? or are you swolne
With an unnaturall envy? I shall hatch
Practices 'bove your reach; and teach your sister
T'obey as well as love: 'tis not your humour
But my command that must dispose of her:
Nor will I aske your leave to have the Dutchesse.
Be what you are, and keepe your Princes love:
Y'have almost lost a fathers.

Exit,

Ben. How he stands?

to Fidelio.

Some wanton lobby Lady sure hath laid
The issue of her pleasures to his charge;
For which the old man chid him.

Fid. I much feare
Part of the cause is mine.

Ben. Two hands in a dish,
The right Court Ordinary.

Fid. Prethee bee
More serious. Why agen dejected thus?

Spn. I have newes for thee *Fidelio.*

Bene. Pay the Post.

Spn. Thou must not have my Sister.

Fid.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Fid. Ha ? 'tis horreur.

Ben. Then 'tis not honour.

Spu. She must be dispos'd of.

Fid. How ? for the Duke ?

Spu. My father so resolves it.

Fid. Then I have lost ---

Ben. Iust nothing.

Fid. Thou prophan'st

A worth, that bids my justice punish thee.

Ben. She's nothing worth, nor to the purpose, if
You have her not.

Fid. If there be more impart it.

Spu. I love the Dutchesse.

Fid. So doe I your Sister.

Ben. And I love both.

Spu. How is that *Beneventi* ?

Love both ?

Ben. Yes, both alike ; that is, love neither.

Spu. My rivall is my father.

Fid. Mine my Sovereigne.

Ben. Then if I be your second against either,
Let the Axe make me first a headlesse monster ;
And Surgeons next in publicke search my parts,
To find where treason lay and patricide.

Spu. What Fates are we two subject to ?

Ben. The worse
If you attempt to better them.

Spu. *Fidelio*,

We will consult a little ; I have had
Grounds for strong hopes, I le not be flatter'd by them ;
But worke with policy. There is within me
A warre 'twixt love and duty : one must be
Destroy'd to quit and set the other free.

Exeunt.

The Vnfortunate Mother.

The Second Act and first Scene.

The Scene being the Dutchesse Chamber.

Infelice, Amanda, Melissa } **A Table**
and Cardente. } **&c.**

Infe. **A** *Manda* you looke sickly, you were wont
To weare a lovely blush upon your cheek, **S**
Such as no Art can counterfeit: your eyes
Were the Court Stars, at which the amorous gallants
Lighted their flames: who but *Amanda* fam'd
For beauty, and a livenesse of spirit;
Your colour's earthy now, your mind unactive:
Nor can such accidents without a cause
Shew their effects. I wish it were communicated
Unto our knowledge.

Card. Madam, it is nothing
But eating Sallets, Oate-meale, and greene fruits,
She hath got the loyng Chamber-maids disease:
On my virginity that's it, she must
Be steel'd to th' purpose.

Infe. I beleeve they are
Some passions rather.

Card. Certainly that's it:
Madam she reades Arcadiacs, Amoretas;
And will discourse this Ladies love and that
So sadly, that the faces in the hangings
Seeme to have sence and weepe: I'me sure I cannot
Forbeare when I remember it.

Am. 'Tis strange,
Your reverend Ladiship hath so much moysture;
Sure you preserv'd your teares, and wasted none
When you were yong, to th'end you might expresse
Your selfe now tender-hearted: What sweet Courtier

But

The Vnfortunate Mother.

But would esteeme those teares and make them bracelets?
Their toughnesse will endure the stringing.

Infe. So, so;
Be lightsome still.

Card. And jeere my age, that hath
Given you counsell; which observ'd, would keepe
Your heart from aking, and your lungen from sighes:
You ne're would cry aye me, that love, but cannot
Be lov'd agen.

Infe. Is she in love *Cardente*?

Card. That's it upon my Maiden-head.

Ama. An o th,
Of great antiquity; the Cavaliers
Us'd it before the battaile of *Lepanto*.

Card. Us'd what? my Maiden-head?

Meli. You would have it constred
In that best sence.

Card. Y're very witty Ladies,
To play on my decaies; I could have done
As well as you: but now have graver thoughts.

Am. The Grave is that best fits them.

Card. Well *Amanda*,
You may agen want counsaile; when you doe
I wish some cough may seize me, or the want
Of my fore teeth make my speech so imperfect,
You may not understand it.

Meli. Very likely;
You need not wish it.

Infe. They are wagges *Cardente*,
But for your mirth *Amanda*'tis affected;
Your soule I doe believe retaines its sadnesse,
Reveale it, and i'le aide thee in the cure.

Ama. Madam I gladly would give satisfaction
Unto your graces curiosity,
So that it might not prejudice faire truth:
To say I'm sicke, were a diffimulation:
If well, you'le not believe it.

Card. How? you well?

The Unfortunate Mother.

When your complexion's like the queen of Spades;
Or like a painting wrought in the first colour;
Or like a wither'd blossome, or a ---

Ama. Hold

Good Lady *Simile*; Or like your Monkey
When he wants Spiders; the poore beast looks scurvily,
And not unlike your Ladiship;

Card. Well, well;
I still must beare with youth.

Ama. If a distemper,
Or a disease that's crept into my blood
Renders me now lesse beautifull, then lately
The flatteries of some esteem'd me; must it
Conclude my mind is sicke?

Inse. Enough *Amanda*,
Yet still I must suspect; when y'are alone
Perhaps she will reveale it.

To Card.
Exit. & privately.

Card. That's it Madame,
We maids will chat so prettily alone;
You did not well *Amanda* to abuse me
Before the Dutchesse; other Ladies would not
Have serv'd me so, and there are few in Court
But would make use of what you slight; my counsell:
I have bin verst in things that might advantage
Your restitution.

Amb. Unto what good Lady?

Card. Your health, your mind; your wits.

Ama. Why doth your reverence
Thinke I am mad?

Card. A little loving frenzie.

Mel. Delude her importunity with some slight,
Shee'le be a trouble else.

To Amanda
& privately.

Card. Pray' thinke not Ladies
This age of nine hath not attain'd some knowledge
From observation. There have bin few passages
In Court which I have not bin privy too.
Ladies have falne and risen; and their timpanies
Have bin cur'd with as secret carriage,

As

The Unfortunate Mother

As e're was practis'd by a suburbe Mid-wife:
I have had plots to save a Ladies honour.

Ama. She hath given me an occasion. *To Melissa privately.*
Mel. Ply it home,

Wee'le raise some mirth from melancholy.

Card. Come,
You must not be reserv'd.

Ama. Might I presume
You would be secret.

Card. How? suspect *Amanda*?
By my virginity

Mel. I doe believe
That Oath will ne're be broken.

Card. Why *Melissa*?
I have bin knowne and knowne these fifty yeares,

My age hath scene Lords turne cast Ladies of

Unto their Pages, and preferment follow;

I have knowne secrets too, and kept them secret

Without any Oath. Is't comming yet?

Ama. 'Tis almost

At my tongues end: but shame---

Card. A figge for shame.

Ama. Perhaps 'tis something cannot be exprest
In modest Language.

Card. Then I must interpret,
And now I see that's it.

Mel. That! what *Cardante*?

Card. Yes, yes; 'tis for: your eye, your noses sharpenesse:
And here's a signe.

Mel. Of *Virgo* I dare sweare.

Card. Of *Gemini*: y^e are subject to strange qualmes.

Are you not Lady? dare you weare a buske?

Are you not quicke? me thinks it kicks on both sides:

You have bin at it to some purpose:

Ama. Shee

Interprets right *Melissa*.

Card. I can doe it.

She's not the first at Court hath had a clap.

And

The Unfortunate Mother.

And let it be my charge to save her honour;
Even the Dutchesse selfe—

Mel. How's that *Cardento*?

Card. Tut I know secrets.

Ama. And you'll reveale them.

How have I fool'd my selfe into a misery,
Prevention cannot free me from? committing
A secret of such consequence to one
Will make my shame the pastime of the Court
By her discovery.

Card. No such matter Lady,
Doubt not a close conveyance; yet I with
You had reveal'd it sooner: Physicke then
Might have done much.

Ama. You'l ayde me then *Cardento*
In the concealment?

Card. I'll not tell the Dutchesse.

Mel. But I will.

Card. What sweet Lady?

Mel. What a creature

Warmes her selfe in her bosome, a Court Bawde;
A cloth of tissue centinell.

Ama. An old eple
Rak't up in counterfeited sanctity:
Thou credulous piece of wickednesse, didst thinke
If any wanton forwardnesse had led me
To such a sin as loosenesse, I would suffer
The knowledge of to passe from me? and especially
To one suspected for a wicked agent
In those base practises, but now discovered.

Card. What will you balie me Ladies?

Mel. Yes, and worry thee;
Thou mother of the maids, thou art fitter farce
To be the Madam regent of the strewes,
Nay wee'le dissect thee.

Am. And before the Dutchesse
Lay open all.

Card. Nay then farewell sweet Ladies.

Mel.

The Unfortunate Mother

Mel. She's gone, and we are free, and now *Amanda*
Let loose thy thoughts; for all are here imprison'd
Thou shalt command releasement.

Am. Oh *Melissa*
I love thy brother, and my virgin flame
Grows every houre more violent.

Mel. Oh *Amanda*
I love thy brother, and my virgin flame
Grows every houre more violent.

Am. You mock me
With ecchoing backe my words.

Mel. I speake a truth
Although with blushes: If your anguish grow
From that sweet passion, how our even scales
Hang in the ballance?

Am. All my hopes are lost,
In that the Dutchesse favours him so much;
My jealousies can point no other end out,
Then their uniting in that fellowship
My wishes covet.

Mel. Have not I like doubts?
The Duke rivalls *Fidius*; and my father
Urgeth unwilling honours, which my feares
Dare not attempt to reach at. I had rather
Sleepe in the sweet embraces of thy brother,
Then be advanc'd to greatness that will make mee
The object of mens envy.

Am. Here's the Dutchesse. *2 Scene. Enter Infelice,*

Corvino, Cariente.

Inf. Wee'l heare you straight *Corvino*. Eye *Amanda*,
Have all your seeming vertues lost themselves
In one foule staine?

Am. Madam let me prevent
Th'abusing of your faith: my honour suffers
In nothing but a counterfeit of that,
With which I mockt her curiosity,
That else refus'd all satisfaction;
And in't betray'd her selfe to the discovery
Of such an inclination, as to thinke on't

The Unfortunate Mother

Renewes the blushes which you say my cheekes
So late have left.

Card. Nay, Madam, I made them
Of any thing that might discover her :
Told her I had beene privy to such cases,
And many a Ladies fall.

Inf. Enough *Cardente*.

But let not such things be your sport hereafter.

Jealousie is a spirit which once rais'd,
Will hardly be commanded downe againe :
And honour is a substance too too nice
To play withall.

Am. I dare expose my selfe
To th' tryall of her jury.

Inf. Urge no more ;

You are believ'd *Amanda*. Now my Lord

We give you hearing.

Cor. Madam, I would whisper

The secrets of my soule.

Inf. Withdraw *Cardente*.

Corv. Madam, if ought appeare an errour in me,

Condemne it not with too severe a sentence,

Till I have pleaded my excuse, I love you :

The generall graces of your minde and person,

In this my settled age hath rais'd high flames :

Which cherisht by your favour will preserve me,

Or quite consume me, if they waste themselves

In your disdain. The disproportion

We weare in outward titles, makes me care

You will refuse consent ; and yet I hope

(Not urging the Dukes favour) you'll allow

My suit consideration, and your answer.

Inf. My Lord *Corvino* you have honour'd mee

In your opinion ; putting such a gloss

On my defects, that I appeare more worthy

Then really I am. My age is subject

To those decayes, that render me unfit

For amorous delights.

Corv.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Corv. Your beauty, Madam, on which you would rely
Is in that freshnesse yet, that were I warm'd
In your faire bosome, all the frost that hangs
Vpon these hairees would quickly be dissolv'd,
And a new spring of liveliness and strength
Quickens this cold and passive earth that holds
An Icy soule within it. You'd restore me
To my best youth agen.

Inse. This love hath taught you
The long neglected practice of your Court-ship:
Forbear it, good my Lord, my griefes are yet
Vnapt for flattery.

Corv. Then give me leave
To speake in plainnesse my desires, that are
You would admit me to your sweet embraces
In lawfull fellowship. You'd satisfie
My longing passions, and your sonnes request,
And pay those services that I have done you;
Which some might but my selfe dare not presume
To call desert.

Inse. Your faithfull services
Have beene rewarded with degrees of honour,
And I expect your gratitude. I never
Discover'd such ambition in your temper
Which alwaies seem'd to levell its just aime
At faire equality. Then good my Lord
Consider your attempts, and how they make
Your vertues much suspected.

Corv. If you dare
Call it a pride that I seek such addition,
Know there's no substance now depends upon
Your empty title which can make a difference,
But I will reeoncile it by my merit,
I am not so inferiour to be check't;
Nor weake in power, but that I can revenge
A scorne that is dishonourable.

Inse. Doe not
Adde to your ills *Corvino*. This had sence

The Unfortunate Mother

As if it did imply you would not owe
A Duty to me now for that you meant
Some treacherous discovery. **Take heed**
Of base ingratitude, which will stain your fame
(which good men call their life) with such a **Leprosie,**
As time can never cleanse it from.

Corv. I then
Must count my selfe refus'd.

Inse. Yes for a husband.
I must prepare for heaven. Nor shall I ever
Admit of new desires, whilst the lov'd memory
Of my dead Lord presents it selfe.

Corv. Your Pardon.
Onely you may consider, 'twas his will
Melissa should be **Dutchess.**

Inse. Not without
The free election of my sonne, who now
Leaves it to time and counsaile. Thus you shall
Shew your ambition. **Dearest Spurio welcome.** *The third Scene*
Let us goe take the ayre. *Enter Spurio.*

Corv. Your graces leave
To have some conference with him.

Inse. When 'tis ended
Attend us in the garden. *(Exit Inse. Card. Aman.)*

Corv. Stay *Melissa*.
Sonne I would urge your duty to reveale
What 'tis disturbs you. I by observation
Have noted odde expressions in your looks,
Your words, and actions, since the late Duke's death,
That argue there's within some strange distemper
Of your best parts, counsaile must rectifie.
I challenge from my interest the will
And power to give it.

Spn. How can I discover
What I yet know not? you must satisfie
Your selfe, and your owne suppositions,
Even by your selfe. If you have fram'd conjectures
From any outward Characters that may

Expresse

The Unfortunate Mother.

Expreſſe an inward perturbation,
Propoſe and I'll reveale it.

Corv. You are in love.

Spu. I have deſires, I muſt confeſſe, but temper them
With a diſcreet reſpect to their beſt end:

Nor doe I ſuffer any to flame out

In violent paſſions.

Corv. But they are directed

To one peculiar object; that's the Dutcheneſſe.

Is it not ſo?

Spu. My breeding and Religion.

Permit me not to lye: ſir, tis a truth;

And you may call it vertuous if you pleaſe:

But duty which you challenge from me checks it.

I neither dare nor will plead any right

Where you are intereſted.

Corv. I aſſigne it all;

She hath o're throwne my caule with ſuch a ſcorne

As burnes me into rage; with theſe ye powers

That guide our not to be reſiſted fates;

How farre ſhe's baniſht from my thoughts.

Spu. You have ſir

Breath'd a new ſoule of comfort into me;

Ile freely now ſolicite for my ſelte,

And try ſucceſſe.

Corv. 'Twill ſhow of youthfull rafineſſe,

Can you ground any hopes?

Spu. From circumſtance

I can; but none with which I will be flatter'd:

The honours which ſhe hath confer'd upon me

Are Arguments ſhe loves me; her fautes

Are alwaies deare or deareſt.

Corv. Yet you muſt not

Marry this Dutcheneſſe.

Spu. How, will you oppoſe it?

You then are ſwolne with an unnaturall envy.

Corv. No more, I muſt diſpoſe you.

Spu. I'll obey.

The Unfortunate Mother

But yet I beg you fir temper your power
With mild command, and deepe consideration:
Thinke on the Dutchesse.

Corv. Thinke upon *Melissa*.

Spu. What of my sister fir?

Corv. She is a beauty
That might invite desire, and crowne the bed
Of any Prince with happinesse. Look on her,
And make her thy election.

Spu. Mine! for what?

Corv. A Wife.

Spu. Defend yee better influences,
No such incestuous dream could e're possesse
My wanton's ft, slumber.

Cor. 'Tis not so incestuous
As that thy inconsideratnesse attempted:
Resolve to take her, and by all my hopes
Of blest eternity, I will not onely
Justifie that for lawfull, but salute thee
Ferrara's lawfull Duke.

Spu. What riddle's this?
Give it solution.

Corv. First resolve to be
What I have promis'd.

Spu. Good fir leave me not
Confounded with amazement: are not you
My Father fir? or who must owne me? Sister,
Is there ought in your knowledge that may satisfie
My doubtfull throughts? must I not call you sister?
Or what's that greater incest I would have
Committed? Can the Dutchesse be my mother?
An Aunt's lesse then a sister?

Mel. Dearest brother,
My knowledge ownes no secret which I would not
As freely make you master of, as with
My selfe a happinesse: I must confesse
My mother oft hath told me that you were not
The issue of her Wombe.

Spu.

The Misfortunate Mother

Spu. There's halfe the riddle
Unfoulded yet.

*4 Scene. Enter Fide-
lio, Benevento.*

Fid. My Lord your valiant brother
This instant is arriv'd, t'enrich the Court
With his full glories: a blazon court his story
With such a praise, it stains his manly cheekes
With modest blushes. He expects your visit.

Spu. I know no brother.

Fid. How my Lord? your vertue
Will suffer by suspicion if y^e expresse
Your selfe or proud or envious.

Spu. Melissa,
I cannot fatisfie your fathers Will,
Though all were clear'd that darkes the reasons of it:
Be still *Fidelior*.

Ben. What the divell ayles him?
His passions are as various as his cloaths;
He shifts them daily: onely keeps one fashion,
And one sad garbe.

Fid. Are you acquainted with
Any events that have relation
Unto your brothers melancholy?

Mel. Some I am,
But urge not their discovery.

Fid. I obey
What ever you command; and hope my services
Will shortly be rewarded.

Mel. Take th'assurance
Of my resolves and promise.

Ben. Trifle not
With court-flattery now: let's thinke on bounding compliments
To bid the Souldiers welcome.

Fid. To the presence,
There is their entertainment: We shall see
What different things Courtiers and Souldiers be.

Exeunt.

The

The third Act and first Scene.

The Scene being the prisoner

Bonardo, Cardente and Fidelie.

Bon. Did she reveal't her selfe Cardente to you?
Or else do you conclude it from some circumstance?
In such a cause I would not have credulity
Mocke it selfe into error.

Card. 'Twas my Lord,
Her owne confession; yet before the Dutchesse
She doth pretend 'twas onely an intent
To mock my curiosity: but I feare
It is too sad a truth.

Bon. To me most sad,
Mine age growes fast upon me; and to have
A stain throwne now upon our House, by one
So eminent in all appearancies
Of good, it makes my wishes halt to meete
The sweet peace of my grave: but yet Cardente
I am not easie to believe.

Card. Nor I.
There may be other causes why a Lady
Of her pure constitution should be subject
To qualmes and puling.

Bon. Is she not in love?

Card. That may be in my Lord, and if you could
Discover who the man is.

Bon. Would that helpe
To cleare suspicion?

Card. All would straight appear
In its full truth; her stain, or innocence;
For thus my Lord. I know the inclinations
Of all the Gallants; which are Goats, which Eunuches:
Now if she doth love any forward youth,

The Unfortunate Mother.

One that will thrust his Knife into the meate
Before he hath said grace (you can apply it)
Tis so ; if not, so.

Fid. My *Italian* nature
Begins to breake her prison, and grow violent;
I'll force her fir to tell me.

Bon. Use no threats,
But mild perswasions ; such as may become
The place : and urge them home before the presence
Fills with more number. Here she is.

Card. Pray Heaven
He doe not stab her.

Fid. Sister are y' in health?

Am. I know not brother, would you'd aske a Doctor;
A skilfull one that hath prov'd more men mortall,
Then a corrupted Vintage, or *French Duells*;
If such a learned mans inspection can
Tell the disease which many thinke I have,
But am not sensible thereof my selfe.

Fid. You slight my question.

Am. Sure it doth deserve
No better answer. How doe I appeare
To every curious eye that undertakes
The reading of my inside? sure that Lady
Hath made you jealous.

Fid. There's a staine *Amanda*
Throwne on you by suspicion, on your honour;
Nothing but blood, or a faire satisfaction
Can wash it off.

Am. I thought some such fine thing
Had mockt your credulous weaknes. Blush to thinke
You owne so low a soule as to suspect
Her whom your love calls sister; though detraction
Spake with a hundred tongues; and mutter'd circumstances
To make it probable,

Fid. Your confidence
Carries the greater show of guilt.

Am. Of guilt!

The Vnfortunate Mother.

Should you present all tortures tyranny
Did e're invent : I have no feares can make me
Belie mine innocence, though it might free me
From all their suffering.

Fid. This doth shew more like
The violence of a distemper'd passion,
Than will to satisfie. 'Twas never yet
Read in the story of our Ancestors,
Any least blemish stuck upon our house.
And if you have transgressed, the knowledge of it
Will poynt us out a way to just revenge,
Or to an honourable recompence ;
And so preserve our yet unsullied fames
Cleare to posterity.

Am. This circumvention
Is of so strange and intricate a nature,
I know not how to free my selfe, but by
Mine owne just testimony. Brother know
Your best prepar'd devotions are not purer
Then my worst thoughts ; their ends being alwayes noble
When I have had desires.

Fid. Not to have some,
Indeed were more than wonder : such a Lady
As you are sister, pamper'd with the fulnesse
Of Court delights, not to elect some one
Prefer'd in her esteeme, were such a paradox,
Not all your learning can maintaine.

Am. Suppose
I should confesse to whom mine are directed ;
He's one that you dare not suspect, much lesse
Accuse of such a sinne that is so farre from
His vertuous inclination.

Fid. I am glad
Your love can give him such a Character,
To know him might advance your desires,
Provided they be honourable.

Am. Brother
You seeme to hedge me in with studied cunning.

But

The Unfortunate Mother.

But I can give my selfe a liberty
By naming him you'd know. I doe affect
Your friend Lord *Spurio*.

Fid. He the man hath done it?—

Am. Done what? your jealousie is weake, and grounded
Upon too nice a feare; and onely propt
With her slight information.

Fid. Stay, stay Sister;
There's something more: Did not you once pretend
You had a powerfull interest in his Sister
That might command me a successe with her?

Am. And you interpret it.

Fid. Nothing good Sister,
But one thing for another.

Am. Hug your errour,
And cherish it untill it sting your bosome:
Your threats shall not enforce another answer
Though the place had no priviledge.

Fid. Enough
Good Sister; I am satisfi'd.

Am. Will you sir
Cherish my duty with a faith?

(*To Bonardo*.)

Bon. Of what?

Am. What that bad woman hath accus'd me of,
Is false as any fabulous Deity
Ascrib'd to wicked mortall.

{ *Bono. and Fi-
delio whisper.*

Card. Nay good Lady,
If any grounded feare hath rais'd suspicion,
Truth ought to be discover'd; if it were,
We then would make provision of some Villa,
Some pretty Country house, under pretence
That ayr's most wholesome for you.

Am. Would thou wert
Without that noysefull instrument of speech;
Or all thy hearers deafe. But that her vertues
Carry their perfect lustre, I should almost
Suspect the Dutchesse, for conferring favour
Upon so vile a woman.

Exit.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Bon. Practice it. (To *Fidelio*. *13 Scene. Enter Po-*
'Twill be a perfect tryall. *lemici, Vittorio, A*

Fid. Here's *Vittoria*, *Lady and Bene-*
And brave *Polemici*, that are return'd *venti.*
With the triumphing *Notho*.

Bon. I embrace yee;
Y'are welcome home to peace, *Salute.*

Vit. We thanke your Lord-ship.

Ben. 'Tis downe right complement; we *Souldiers*
Are sparing of our words my Lord: blowes chiefly
Are our discourse.

Pole. We Courtiers *Beneventi*
Can talke, but seldome fight.

Bon. That hit you home. *To Beneventi.*

Ben. How dare you offer to salute the *Ladies*,
Before y'have shifted shirts? sure your *Campe* *Laundresse*
Never perfum'd your linnen.

Pole. Had you bin
There *Beneventi*, 'twould have made your linnen
Soone want perfuming.

Card. Souldiers doe not use *To Beneventi.*
Other perfumes than match and Gun-powder.

Ben. Were you converted into it *Cardene*,
You'd sweeten their *Buffe-jerkins*.

Lady. Were I Gun-powder
I'd blow you up.

Pole. You take your servants part.

Ben. You serve a *Lady*! *Ladies* should serve you
For your good service to the Duke and State:
Oh the mens heads that you cut off, *Polemici*!

Pole. The Maiden-heads you purchast in our absence:
Many a Suburbe agent is inricht by't;
Though to the losse of your owne State and conscience:
Ingeniously confesse your chiefe imployment.

Ben. We feigne our selves as vertuous as the Duke,
And are as chaste at Court as wither'd *Eunuches*:
But when we are at liberty abroad,
Ease and high feeding cannot hold out long:

Then

The Unfortunate Mother.

Then to't like Monkeyes Captaine. Sure your selves
Doe piddle now and then with Suttlers wives;
And are content to praise their rana'd complexions
For most rich beauties; whilst we Courtiers
Ravish delights from lipps that tast of Nectar,
And thinke our selves in Heaven.

Pole. Whilst we Souldiers
After a tedious match, are forst to make
The earth our bed without a Pillow, sheets,
Or silver warming-pan; start from our sleepe
At every sound the ayres light motion makes,
Thinking it an alarme: Returne from fight
Smear'd o're with blood and sweat, and savourly
Take the refreshment of a troubled water;
Whose muddy streames our Horses would scarce tast
But for necessity: fast till our guts
Contract themselves so close they will scarce hold
The full digestion of one Lark.

Ben. Good Captaine
No more of this discourse; it mortifies me:
But now the Wars are ended, you'l turne Courtier!
'Tis quickly learnt.

Pole. You have instructed me,
Dissemble first an imitation
Of the Dukes vertues; feed high, and be lazie;
Next leacherous: is't not so?

Ben. A great proficient,
You'l quickly take Degrees.

Pole. In the last Schoole
We shall out-strip you Courtiers; for observe
If any one of you should rivall us,
And dare to intercept our pleasures, we
Can beate you *Benevents*, marke me, beate you;
And sure the Duke would give us pensions for it,
To keepe your Goat-ships honest.

Lady. Witty Souldier,
He fits you at all weapons.

Ben. Yours, the tongue;

The Vnfortunate Mother.

But that it wants some of your womans length:
Hee'd h t you otherwise.

Bon. Peace thus playes with war;
And makes it pastime.

Fid. Here's the noble Conquerour,

Mac. Welcome agen into our bosome Souldier.

Wee'd have you now leave action, and apply

Your ready will to entertaine and manage

The honours we intend you, as rewards

Due to your valour and successe: you have

Setled our peace at home by the subversion

Of all our neighbouring enemies, and now

'Tis fit you share a full proportion

Of all you labour'd for, that we in ease

And softnesse might securely please our senses;

And know no sufferings more then what are incident

To every prince, our cares: those lesson'd too

By our grave Counsailes industry. I wish

You would move something from your owne desires,

That granted might be valewed by your selfe:

We should bee free.

Not. Ambition never toucht me.

If I have done an act hath gain'd allowance

In popular opinion, let not flattery

Court it with too much praise. These ought to share;

And every common souldier well as I:

I but directed what they executed,

Let your rewards sir, smile upon their wants,

For sure our victory brought much more honour

Then profit home: nor could I thinke it lesse

Than tyranny to slave men being conquer'd,

And force them buy their liberty; though in pollicy

And custome 'tis allow'd both safe and honourable.

Cherish their valour sir, and the example

Will (when your need requires it) arme the hearts

Of others with like forwardnesse.

Mac. Wee give

The spoiles to be distributed, and pension

To

The Unfortunate Mother.

To every souldier, and unto thy selfe
I know not what : considerate judgements must
Allow the gift a worth before I offer it.
Embrace you two whilst I embrace yee both.
Why doth my *Spurio* frowne upon his brother?
Can his cleare soule give entertainment to
Neglect or envy? such a glorious paire
To suffer an Ecclipse.

Spu. Your victory
And person both are welcome.
Not. Both must serve you.

Inf. Deare valiant *Notho*, now you have put off
The rough abilliments of War, pray weare
These ornaments for my sake. *Gives him Jewells.*

Not. They are favours.
An Easterne Monarch might be proud of Madama
A Mine could not have made your servant richer
In's owne esteeme.

Card. Trust me the Souldier speaks
Excellent Court-ship Ladies. Those rich Jewells
Will be yours shortly; and I would advise you
Not to refuse them upon any termes
When they are offer'd.

Inf. Your deserts require
Some due acknowledgement. *Gives him Jewells.*

Pole. These Madam are
Bounties above them.

Mac. Doe not you my Lord
Conceive strange joyes, to see so faire an issue
Make your age happy?

Corv. 'Tis a happinesse
For which I owe Heaven thanks.

Ben. What thinke you Captaine
You seldome found such spoiles in a py'd Knapp-sack.
Doe you know how to use them?

Pole. Not as you doe,
Like Children; play with them.

Ben. You'd pawne them rather?
Pole.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Pole. That I beleeve you use.

Mac. Wee'l have some revells;

'Tis fit that Souldiers sometimes should have rest,

And tast the Courts delights.

Ben. You'l find there's difference

Betwixt a Courtier and a Souldier Capitaine.

Pole. There's much.

Ben. How much?

Pole. As much as is betwixt

A good sword and a Fiddle-sticke.

Ben. But how

Doe you apply them?

Pole. That unto my selfe.

I best know how to use.

Mac. Wee'l first thanke Heaven,

And then wee'l see some maskery. **This day**

Wee'l honour with solemnities,

Spa. With me sir?

Not. Brother.

Spa. Forget that name; it must be lost

To both our memories.

Not. Sure mine preserves not

The least impression of an injury

I ever did you, that might justly challenge

Th' acquaintance of that Title. Others looke

Upon my fortune with respectfull smiles;

You either scorne or envy it.

Spa. I doe neither;

But there are secrets which my knowledge cannot

Yet comprehend, till time makes more discoveries:

If it appeare then you are not my brother,

Say not it was my fault.

Not. I would you give me

A fuller satisfaction.

Spa. When I can

I will not be reserv'd.

Not. I know not what

Your words imply, unless you'll call me bastard;

And

The Unfortunate Mother.

And that hath danger in't. No priviledge
Of nature, or respects unto the greatnesse

Favour hath rais'd you to

Spur. Hee's here can satisfie.

Cor. Will you yet wedde *Melissa*?

Spur. Never fir;

I would you'd cleare my doubts.

Cor. Oh never fir,

Till you performe that act.

Spur. My ignorance

And innocence shall then preserve me safe;

There may be danger in the knowledge of it:

Hence forth Ile not be curious.

Not. Sir, my duty

That taught me humble knees, and an obedience

Is somewhat stagger'd; something hath bogot

A jealousie within me, that I ought not

Pay them to you: but still my vertuous reason

Doth fight against that sin.

Cor. What meane you *Notho*?

Not. My brother fir, or *Spurio* (for the name

Of brother he refuseth) sayes we are not

The issue of one blood.

Cor. It was a folly,

And inconsiderate rashnesse to betray

Himselfe to so much hazard.

Not. Sir, the knowledge

Would settle my disturbances, and make

Agan that duty perfect, which yet doubts

To whom it owes it selfe.

Cor. Those words of his

Might be interpreted; and I confesse

My wanton youth had much unlawfull issue:

Of which perhaps he's one.

Not. My lawfulnessse

Had then first priviledge to take exception:

I must not now owne him.

Cor. Yes; for my love

The Unfortunate Mathew

Is equall to you both.

Not. In that you are unjust to the deserts of my dead mother;
And th' Honour'd family whence she deriv'd
Her blood and vertues.

Cor. It becomes not you
To taxe my partiall humour, **since your selfe**
Is equally unlawfull.

Not. You have aw'd me,
'Twas not my sin; and thus my duty begs
The publicke knowledge may not be my shame.

Cor. That shall not stain, thy fame stains not thy conscience;
And tell me **Not**, dar' st be great
My childre be

What fortune **or my reason prompts me to do**
If warranted for lawfull.

Car. Dar' st be Duke?
Not. Forbid it loyalty.

Car. 'Tis in my power
To make thee justly so.

Not. If't be my right,
There's no attempt that can have danger in't
Enough to fright me.

Cor. Shall't attempt no danger:
The prosecution shall be politicke
And safe. But first thou must resolve to doe
What I command thee.

Not. Speake it.
Cor. Wed **Melissae**

Not. Did ever father yet command his Children
To be incestious! is your reason perfect?
This shewes distraction.

Cor. All depends upon it;
And Heaven knowes 'tis lawfull: **Therefore be**
Suddaine in thy resolves.

Not. What fit hath caus'd him?
Pole. The Ladies eyes have shot some wanton fire
Into his heart: my Lord.

Not.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Not. Polemici

I have heard wonders, and your becomes shall
Partake the secret, so you'll keepe it safe :

'Tis of high consequence.

Pole. They are the same
Safe Closets you have trusted.

Not. You'd not envy me
If I were Duke.

Pole. We should not sure unless
It made you proud.

Not. But dare your valours aide me
In the designe?

Pole. Why what disloyall divell
Hath put these thoughts into you? have we sav'd
Our throates from cutting by the enemy
To feeble the Hang-mans Axe? why how dare you
Cherish such vaine ambition? if you should
Marry the Dutchesse, she must have no sonne first:
And then 'tis doubtfull whether the election
Will be conferr'd on you. There are more worthies
That hold as good opinion in the state.

Not. But say it be my rig

Pole I never studied
Your Gencalogy so much, to find
How there might be relation; if there's any
Let it appeare.

Not. You shall know more hereafter;
Strange misteries in fortunes hidden lye,
Cannot be judg'd of by a common eye.

Exeunt.

The Unfortunate Mother

Pole. That I beleever you use.

Mac. Wee'l have some revells;

'Tis fit that Souldiers sometimes should have rest,

And tast the Courts' delights.

Ben. You'll find there's difference

Betwixt a Courtier and a Souldier Captaine.

Pole. There's much.

Ben. How much?

Pole. As much as is betwixt
A good sword and a Fiddle-sticke.

Ben. But how
Doe you apply them?

Pole. That unto my selfe
I best know how to use.

Mac. Wee'l first thanke Heaven,
And then wee'l see some maskery. **This day**
Wee'l honour with solemnities.

Spu. With me sir?

Not. Brother.

Spu. Forget that name; it must be left
To both our memories.

Not. Sure mine preserves not
The least impression of an injury
I ever did you; that might justly challenge
Th' acquaintance of that Title. Others looke
Upon my fortune with respectfull smiles;
You either scorne or envy it.

Spu. I doe neither;
But there are secrets which my knowledge cannot
Yet comprehend, till time makes more discoveries:
If it appeare then you are not my brother,
Say not it was my fault.

Not. I would you give me
A fuller satisfaction.

Spu. When I can
I will not be reserv'd.

Not. I know not what
Your words imply, unless you call me bastards;

And

The Unfortunate Mother.

And that hath danger in't. No priviledge
Of nature, or respects unto the greatnesse

Favour hath rais'd you to

Spur. Hee's here can satisfie.

Cor. Will you yet wedde *Melissa*?

Spur. Never sir,

I would you'd cleare my doubts.

Cor. Oh never sir,

Till you performe that act.

Spur. My ignorance

And innocence shall then preserve me safe;

There may be danger in the knowledge of it:

Hence forth Ile not be curious.

Not. Sir, my duty

That taught me humble knees, and an obedience

Is somewhat stagger'd; something hath begot

A jealousie within me, that I ought not

Pay them to you: but still my vertuous reason

Doth fight against that sin.

Cor. What meane you *Notho*?

Not. My brother sir, or *Spurio* (for the name

Of brother he refuseth) sayes we are not

The issue of one blood.

Cor. It was a folly,

And inconsiderate rashnesse to betray

Himselfe to so much hazard.

Not. Sir, the knowledge

Would settle my disturbances, and make

Agan that duty perfect, which yet doubts

To whom it owes it selfe.

Cor. Those words of his

Might be interpreted; and I confesse

My wanton youth had much unlawfull issue:

Of which perhaps he's one.

Not. My lawfulness

Had then first priviledge to take exception:

I must not now owne him.

Cor. Yes; for my love

The Unfortunate Mathew

Is equal to you both.

Not. In that you are unjust to the deserts of my dead mother, And the Honour'd family whence she deriv'd Her blood and virtues.

Cor. It becomes not you To tax my partiall humour, since your selfe Is equally unlawfull.

Not. You have aw'd me, 'Twas not my sin; and thus my duty begs The publicke knowledge may not be my shame.

Cor. That shall not stain, thy fame stains not thy conscience And tell me *Not*, dar't be great

What fortune or my reason prompts me to do If warrant'd for lawfull.

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Car. 'Tis in my power To make thee justly so.

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Cor. All depends upon this And Heaven knowes 'tis lawfull: Therefore be Suddaine in thy resolves.

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The Unfortunate Mother.

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Partake the secret, so you'l keepe it safe:

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Safe Closets you have trusted.

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If I were Duke.

Pole. We should not sure unless
It made you proud.

Not. But dare your valours aide me
In the designe?

Pole. Why what disloyall diuell
Hath put these thoughts into you? have we sav'd
Our throates from cutting by the enemy
To feele the Hang-mans Axe? why how dare you
Cherish such vaine ambition? if you should
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And then 'tis doubtfull whether the election
Will be conferr'd on you. There are more worthies
That hold as good opinion in the state.

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Your Genealogy so much, to find
How there might be relation; if there's any
Let it appeare.

Not. You shall know more hereafter;
Strange misteries in fortunes hidden lye,
Cannot be judg'd of by a common eye.

Exeunt.

The Unfortunate Mother.

The Fourth Act and first Scene.

The Scene being the Gallery.

Spurio and Fidelio.

Fid. 'T Is an unkindnesse thus to be reserv'd,
And hide the causes of your discontent;
The priviledge of friendship should be larger;
And not confin'd to any weak respects
That bound its limits. I should not conceale
My secret't sinnes from you, but for the scandall.

Spu. Fidelio, I am lost in such a mist
Of doubts and error, all my reasons faculties
Cannot instruct my knowledge how to find
A way that leades to truth.

Fid. If any counsell
My weak abilities can ayde you with
May be thought usefull —

Spu. Urge it not *Fidelio*;
To know and not to remedy increaseth
The suffering more.

Fid. My love would not interpret
Neglect or jealousie to be the cause
Of these expressions; if you doe suspect it,
I then may ground a feare you have declin'd
Your wonted purity: and through the guilt
Of some foule act makes shame o're sway your reason,
You doe enforce your blushing soule to be
Th' unwilling prison of so vile an evill
You dare not give it liberty.

Spu. This is
Such an extreame *Fidelio*, I should rather
Admit of flattery then to be taxt thus.
Time and your neerenesse to me might have taught
Your knowledge, something by observing me,

And

The Vnfortunate Mother.

And how my courses tended : There was never
The coursenesse in my humour, that it pleas'd me
To heare my selfe commended : but the life
Of honour being wounded by detraction,
Or any false aspersiō, 'twere a sin
Equall to guilt should I neglect to cure it
By any testimony ; though it fore'd me
To Praise my selfe, above all the degrees
Of moderation : Therefore good *Fidelia*
Neither be partiall to me, nor let weakenesse
Interpret any private act of mine
From common rumour : such an even temper
Would make our friendship lasting.

Fid. I my Lord
Thinke you so farre from being vitious,
Your scruples scarce allow those vertues in you
A merit, which to us might be examples.

Spu. I meant you no such priviledge.

Fid. Beleeve it,
I will not flatter you ; for sure you have
Some easie faults, that will admit th' excuse
Of frailty : such as love.

Spu. Is Love a sinne then ?

Fid. Yes, when it burnes with a corrupted flame,
And lights desire to what is sensuall onely,
Without regard of ought that makes our difference
The most refin'd and perfect in its nature :
Beasts have their lust.

Spu. I almost understand you,
But sure you dare not thinke me forward that way ;
Your error were not friendly : neither is there
A Lady so neglected : she would court
My shallow worth, or yeeld if she were courted.

Fid. There is that Magick in your masculine graces,
Th'have charm'd the beauty of the Court to love you :
And 'tis arriv'd my knowledge.

Spu. What's that beauty ?
Instruct my ignorance,

The Unfortunate Mother.

Fid. *Amanda* sir,
And though she be my sister, I doe give her
No attribute, fame and the generall voyce
Confirme? not to her.

Spu. With that name thou hast
Charm'd me *Fidelio* throughly, and recall'd
My apoplexi'd thoughts to their first life.
Mine eyes were blinded with the Dutchesse so,
I could not see that happinesse which now
I wish next to my eternity. But give me
Assurance good *Fidelio*.

Fid. That were vaine nesse;
And now I must confesse you had great cause
To be disturb'd : professe love to the Dutchesse,
When you had given *Amanda* such deepe earnest.

Spu. What earnest meane you? yet I ne're saluted
Her cares with a request; or urg'd the grane
Of what you say, her inclination
Would freely give me.

Fid. Why should you expresse
This nice unwillingnesse to be discover'd?
The knowledge of't as yet is limited
To a small number, and the memory
Of her dishonour will be quickly lost
In a faire recompence.

Spu. There's nothing cleere
To me in this darke mistery, but that
The beauty you call sister is a Whore :
Is it not so?

Fid. Your selfe can best interpret,
And yet me thinks another name would sound
More Court-like; and not have halfe so much offensive;
For though she have the staine, I know she holds
That nobtenesse of spirit, none but such a one
As your full selfe could ever win her to it;
And a faire satisfaction vow'd withall:
Which sure you will performe.

Spu. Thou art a villaine;

Did

The Unfortunate Mother.

Did my election from a world of men
Single thee out to be so much my selfe;
The union of our soules would not admit
Of a division, but that interchange
And custome taught us read each others thoughts?
And can that soule of thine expresse it selfe
Subject, so easily to be corrupted
With jealousie and errour? Then let Moralists
Fable henceforth no empty name of friendship,
Nor boast there's such a secret; I shall never
Weare thee more here.

Fid. This is no satisfaction,
I dare beleeve your innocence; if you
Dare urge it solemnly, and thereby give it
A confirmation.

Spu. That my pitty cannot
Deny thy weakenesse: witness Heaven ---

Fid. Enough,
You shall not sweare; I credit it, and my penitence. (*Kneeles.*)
Humbles me for your pardon.

Spu. Rise and take it:
But I would know upon what circumstance
This jealousie was grounded.

Fid. Th' information
Came from *Cardente*, and her owne acknowledgement
Of her desires to you. But she shall dye,
Her shame must not out live her.

Spu. How *Fidelio*!
Mocke not thy selfe out of eternity;
By such a sin will likewise render thee
A scorne to memory: her innocence
May suffer falsely. 'Tis not supposition,
But prooffe that must condemne her; sure there cannot
Be lodg'd in such a frame as is *Amandas*
A thought but noblenesse: I'd soone take
A wither'd Anchorette into my suspect.
As her sweet purity.

Fid. You'd have her live then?

Spu.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Spu. Why not? to make me happy.

Fid. Marry her,

And to't agen; 'till that confirms all lawfull,
I must forbid more pleasure;

Spu. What words fall
From thy distraction? dar'st renew thy guilt
By a worse second jealousie?

Fid. You'll be
Her Champion too? this zeale of yours confirms
That truth which was but doubt;

Spu. I shall forget
The place hath any priviledge; but come fir,
Since my cleere protestations will not satisfie,
Wee'l argue it with these.

Fid. There will not be
Much Fallacy.

Am. Is your beleeve good brother
Yet rectifi'd?

Fid. I must not owne thee: hence.

Spu. Since she is heere---

Fid. This trifling smells of cowardise.

Spu. Away then.

Am. What's the meaning? two such friends
To be divided!

Mel. By that interest
My love doth challenge, let us know the motives
To this strange anger.

Fid. Pardon me *Melissa*,
I must (though willingly I would not doe it)
Forget your vertues.

Am. Let our teares divert
Your rash and violent purpose: trust me fir,
Unlesse a noble cause hath fir'd your spirits---

Spu. 'Tis yours *Amanda*.

Am. Then I understand it;
And challenge it my priviledge to order
Your reconciliation. Brother, know
Your error hath dishonour'd you so much,

That

The Vnfortunate Mother.

That till you have cald backe to your opinion
My fame and innocence, I must not owne you.
To raise a scandall of high consequence
From such an empty and perverse suspition
And not to cleere it with the satisfaction
Both of protests and testimonie, argues
A soule lesse noble than the generous blood
Of our brave Ancestors successively
Inherited; producing actions,
The subject of large stories. Let *Melissa*
Witnesse th' intent; a humorous counterfeit,
To mocke *Cardente* curiosity
Into an apt discovery of her selfe
And wicked inclinations; that we knowing them
Our care might shun her courses.

Fid. This *Amanda*

Beleev'd would bring me peace agen.

Mel. Beleeve it; For 'tis a truth cleere as the innocence
Of babes: after the holy ceremony
Hath purg'd th' originall staine.

Fid. I am confirm'd;

And aske agen your pardon! Yours *Amanda*.
I doe presume upon.

Am. Your noble anger
Hath such a faire excuse, that I must thanke you.
Your errour onely was your fault, and that
My pittie pardons freely.

Spn. This hath likewise
Restor'd me to new hopes: and faire *Amanda*,
If your esteeme hath added any worth
To my defects that make them seeme perfections,
Such as may please your chaste and free desires;
If you'l possesse me with the happinesse
Of blessed union, 'tis the onely one
That I would covet.

Am. Let my blushes speake
A maids consent, and in them you may read
My thoughts direction that made you their object;
Mixing themselves with feares, hopes, jealousies;

The Unfortunate Mother.

And all that's incident to earnest love,
May it be crown'd with such a faire event,
'Twill make your hand-maid happy.

Spu. 'Twill but be A mutuall exchange.

Fid. I hope our loves *To Melissa.*
Are growne so ripe, the fasting of our joyes
Will not be long protracted.

Mel. Even when *Bonardo, and Cardente.*
It pleaseth the high providence.

Card. My Lord
Observe how they are pair'd. Doubtlesse all's cleere:
And sure hee'l make amends.

Bon. My Lord *Corvino,*
If your consent will ratifie---

Corv. You need not
Urge it agen. Have you observ'd *Cardente*
Ought in *Melissas* inclination *(Corvino & Card. whisper.)*
Towards *Fidelio*?

Card. That's it; she is stricke
With the blind Archer.

Spu. From a cloud of errour *To Bonardo.*
A light is broken that hath made new day
In our darke treasons, and directed me
To that which yeelds my being here a happinesse,
'Bove any forme I could prescribe my wishes:
My knowledge learnt it from th' imperfect motives
To your suspicion; without which discovery
My ignorance had lost it: but it cannot
Be full till crown'd with your consent,

Bon. You have it;
And I as freely pardon both your faults:
Your frailty doth excuse them.

Spu. You'l returne
To your first errour; let not a new jealousie
Stagger our faire proceedings: We have climb'd
Halfe of our height already: and to fall
From such bright hopes.

Am. As you would cherish duty

Or

The Unfortunate Mother

Or other vertues in me, cleere the mist
That hangs before your reason; you shall see
The whitenesse of my innocence: confirme it
With your beliefes (for truth is onely valued
As 'tis receiv'd) I shall meet his embraces
With all my Virgin sweets, like evening ayre
Without a cloud; when it but onely blusheth
To kisse the Sun at parting.

Spw. 'Tis receiv'd
As positive a truth as e're came from
A *Sybil's* mouth.

Bon. It hath restor'd thee likewise
To my now rectifi'd opinion:
Blessings dwell with you.

Fid. Please you Lord *Corvino* To *Corvino*
With your consent to perfect what's begun
So fairely here; and make our union adde
Something to this dayes glory.

Corv. Shee *Fidelsia*
Wants much to meet your full deserts; your love
Perhaps she may: when I have order'd her
With some becomming counsell.

Bon. Hee's my sonne,
And shall inherite honours and possessions,
With vertues to their best dependances;
Grant that you like of the election,
And the solemnities of both their marriages
To morrowes sun shall gaze at.

Corv. Pray my Lord
Give me a fathers priviledge to prepare her
With some fit precepts; then few minutes shall
Resolve it.

Bon. Wee'l expect. *Exeunt Bonar. Spw. Am. Fid.*

Corv. *Melissa*, you
Have made my age conceive as many hopes
As ever father did to make him happy.
Kill not their issue by a rash neglect,
And voluntary losse of that which perfect
And order'd judgements doe call happinesse;

The Unfortunate Mother.

Above th' enjoying of a course desire;
 Confin'd to a meaner person too : if greatnesse
 Were not a relative to all that's good,
 And glorious in the generall speculation
 Of things that doe affect us, not in fence,
 But the bright part of reason ; emulous man
 Would not through danger mannage actions,
 So full of wonder, nor imploy his faculties
 In high designs : but like a heavy lump
 That onely by its weight moves to its center,
 And there sleepe, so should we : leave no
 As the Record of any memorable
 And brave atchievement, for a monument
 That such men once had being. To be Dutchesse
 Will not impair your vertues; they would take
 More luster from the title. Now
 I'd have you quench that low and common flame
 That burnes towards *Fidelio*; and embrace
 Those high desires I point you to : my pollicy
 Hath order'd the successe, and your obedience
 By your subjecting of it to my will,
 Shall crowne you with full blessings.

Mel. Honour'd Sir,

The duty which I owe you, and which ought not
 Be mention'd without reverence, humbles me
 Thus to expresse it. If I could new mould
 My frame and temper fit for such great honours.
 I should embrace them with the entertainment
 Of my most ready will. My constitution
 Is of too coarse a matter to receive
 Such nice impressions. Those whom Heaven hath
 Ordain'd for Princes, are of purer earth
 Then common mortals sure; and by instinct
 Both know, and order their high difference,
 To make it fit for greatnesse. If I were
 The Dutchesse sir, my thoughts would still betray
 Me to my selfe; and such imperfect actions
 Receive their ordering from my weak abilities,
 They'd render me a scorn to those, that otherwise

Would

The Vnfortunate Mother.

Would pay me reverence.

Corv. Your unwillingnesse.

Playes with illusions that are vaine and empty.

In what are you defective but your will;

That's regulated by a childish humour;

Let your consideration weigh th' events

Are incident to both : when you are Dutchesse

You'l be above the danger of your fortune;

And awe that weake necessity to which

The other may be subject.

Card. Sure your father

Saith right sweet Lady ; there's much difference

Betwixt the Dutchesse and a subjects wife;

Betwixt a chaire of State, and a thum'd couch;

A Wardrobe that would furnish a *Yesso* Lumbrey,

And one embroydred petty-coats for Sundaies;

And that perhaps not paid for too. Be wise,

Obeys your father Lady and be Dutchesse:

'Twill be the better choice.

Mel. Content abounds

In riches, when the owners of cramb'd Treasures

Unsatish'd are beggers. Sir, the Duke

Having refus'd me, how can I affect him?

And where love is enforc'd.

Card. Why there's your priviledge,

Great Ladies ought not love: their husbands more

Then in a iust proportion of state.

Corv. *Melissa*, I doe find your inclination :

And though my zeale intended your advancement

Which you your selfe refuse, yet my indulgence

Tyes up mine anger : onely I must wish you

Consider thoroughly.

Mel. Sir, my duty shall not

Give way to any act without your liking;

Although I have desires I can restrain them

From satisfaction.

Corv. Would *Fidelio* were not

His love, a love diverts her.

Card. There are means;

The Unfortunate Mother

You understand my Lord : but yet I do not advise you to blit. W

Corv. Thou art wise *Cardente*,
And canst be secret too for thou and I
Know something hidden to the world : 'Tis better
Give her some Philter, that may raise in her
A flame towards the Duke.

Card. But is there vertue in any such ?

Corv. My youth hath made experience,
And I am furnisht with that is powerfull :
I beare it still about me.

Card. Good my Lord
Impart it to my use ; I faine would have A Husband yet.

Cor. Why thou maist have *Fidelio*,
A yong and handsome Lord. It chiefly workes
Upon such disproportions ; share it justly.
You both must take it, for in that consists
The magick Sympathy.

Card. Ile to my Closet
And pray, then love.

Cor. *Polemici*, where left you
My valiant Sonne ?

Pole. Notho ! hee's in the presence.

Corv. When you returne, desire him meet me in
The Grove behind the Garden.

Pole. I scarce thinke
Hee'l owne you when hee's Duke : *Vittorio*,
What think'st thou of this riddle ?

Vitt. 'Tis a hard one, he to be Duke and lawfull !

Pole. He begins
To forme himselfe furth : he takes survey
Of all that he supposeth shoulde must
Bow to his humour : tell's me hee'l new mould
The State, and we shall be advanc'd.

Vitt. To th' Gallows.

Pole. I doe not like such saying ; let's be honest,
And though we cannot make a full discovery
Of this so close and intricate proceeding,
Wee'l intimate some feares that may betray him
To jealousie and care ; that watchfull eyes

The Unfortunate Mother.

Observing him, if ought should be attempted,
It may be stifted by prevention in the first birth;

Vitt. His favours yet deserve
We should preserve him,

Pole. Yes, I would preserve him,
But chiefly from the dangers incident
To such a vaine ambition, into which
Hee's flatter'd by his father: But upon
What ground, I doe not thinke the divell ownes
A perfect knowledge: Sure he cannot thinke
There's power in his successe to make him popular,
And leade the multitude in their disorder
To wish an innovation first, then practise it.

Vitt. He saith it is his right.

Pole. But where's the testimony?
Hell on these darke devises. Well, let's be
Like valiant Souldiers in the Reare, that dare
Goe on, whilst the front stands to be their bulwarke:
But breaches made therein to shew them danger,
In flight they put their safety. Let's observe,
And adde more to our knowledge; then resolve:
He that persues an act, that is attended
With doubtfull issues, for the means had need
Of policy and force to make it speed. *Exeunt.*

Act. 5. First Scene. *The Scene the Grove.*

Corvino and Nerha.

Corv. **T**His preparation of your high resolves

I must allow with wonder: sure you had
Some revelation of the weighty secret;
Or else instinct hath taught your knowledge more
Then a weake judgement could conclude from doubts;
And those bare circumstances I have us'd
T' instruct you by.

Nor. But if *Ferrara* must
Owne me her Duke, what progresse yet is order'd

For

The Unfortunate Mother.

For my establishment: great actions ought not
Want equall meanes: and sure my single force
May not encounter such an opposition
As I shall meet. To challenge it my right
And not maintaine it, renders me the lawes:
I would not pay my life for a distracted
Unwarrantable action. If it may
Be pleaded or with force, or testimony,
I am above all feares. *Corv.* I have a faction
Which with your party will make up a power
Of strength enough: but there is no such need.
Melissa joyn'd unto you will be more
Than any numerous Army of resolv'd
And faithfull spirits: she alone shall cleere
All that is yet in mists.

Not. If you'l take from me
The scruples that I have about its lawfulness,
Ile court her to prevaile.

Corv. You may command her,
Confirm it with an Oath as y'are a Prince;
And as I hope the ends of my ambition
Will meet successe, you shall be satisfi'd.

Not. By all the vertuall powers that make an Oath
Sacred, I vow onely to wedde *Melissa*;
Provided it be lawfull. *Corv.* Then accept

My duty sir, that owes subjection
Duely to none but you. It is your birth-right
That shall preferre you 'fore this yong usurper;
And thus his knee to whom yours oft hath bended *Kneeles.*
Humbles it selfe for pardon, that my brest
So long conceal'd what should make many happy.

Not. I then am elder sonne to the late Duke I
And onely yours suppos'd: I must acknowledge
A large debt to you for my education,
Which answer'd my high birth. But can this have
Cleere confirmation?

Corv. As the brightest ayre
The Sun illumines.

Not. I am then a Prince,
And you my onely Subject:
For I know not

Who else will pay obedience to me. *Corv.*

The Unfortunate Mother.

Corv. All Will follow my example; for the rumour
As it growes bigger will incense the multitude:
From whom your fortunes and deserts have won
Both love and admiration. Fury then
Runnes them into a lumpe, or monstrous forme
With many heads, that carry their mad body
Reelingly forward, where they find resistance
Growing more violent: when to prevent
The mischievous effects of such an uproare:
The cause is askt and knowne; expostulated:
And your right prov'd by me, the generall voyce
Salutes you Duke. And shortly after you
May call *Melissa* Dutches. *Not.* I have heard
She doth affect *Fidelio*, And unlesse
She be diverted ---. *Corv.* By this time *Fidelio*
Hath not his being,

Not. Have you kild him then?

Cor. Both politickly 'tis and safely order'd,
Cardente poisons both him and her selfe.

Not. Could you have such a conscience?

Car. Nice religion
Awes not a Politician. They both stood
Betwixt me and my ends.

Not. You have confest
Your selfe a murderer, 'twas a bad act;
And you have added to it: the discovery
Hath made me guilty by the knowledge of it.
I cannot but with horreur now embrace
Her love, for which his innocence hath suffer'd:
Nor will I marry her.

Cor. Dare you then be
Unjust to your owne honour? and neglect
That which you call religion, we but forme?

Not. You have instructed me: all other vertues
Depend on Iustice; she alone is perfect
Without addition in her selfe. A Prince
Cannot deserv'dly weare the royall title,
That orders not it, nor is order'd by it.
Justice with tyranny may be allow'd

H

Rather

The Unfortunate Mother

You understand my Lord : but yet I do not advise you to it. W

Corv. Thou art wise *Cardente*, and I shall do as thou sayest
And canst be secret too for thou and I shall do as thou sayest
Know something hidden to the world : 'Tis better
Give her some Philter, that may raise in her
A flame towards the Duke.

Card. But is there vertue in any such ?

Corv. My youth hath made experience,
And I am furnisht with that is powerfull :
I beare it still about me.

Card. Good my Lord
Impart it to my use ; I faine would have A Husband yet.

Cor. Why thou maist have *Fidelio*,
A yong and handsome Lord. It chiefly workes
Upon such disproportions ; share it justly.
You both must take it, for in that consists
The magick Sympathy.

Card. Ile to my Closet
And pray, then love. *Exit.*

Cor. *Polemici*, where left you
My valiant Sonne ?

Pole. Notho ! hee's in the presence.

Corv. When you returne, desire him meet me in
The Grove behind the Garden.

Pole. I scarce thinke
Hee'l owne you when hee's Duke : *Vittorio*,
What think'st thou of this riddle ?

Vitt. 'Tis a hard one, he to be Duke and lawfull !

Pole. He begins
To forme himselfe for't : he takes survey
Of all that he supposeth shortly must
Bow to his humour : tell's me hee'l new mould
The State, and we shall be advanc'd.

Vitt. To th' Gallows.

Pole. I doe not like such saying : let's be honest,
And though we cannot make a full discovery
Of this so close and intricate proceeding,
Wee'l intimate some feares that may betray him
To jealousie and care ; that watchfull eyes

Obser-

The Unfortunate Mother.

Observing him, if ought should be attempted,
It may be stifted by prevention in the first birth,

Vitt. His favours yet deserve
We should preserve him,

Pole. Yes, I would preserve him,
But chiefly from the dangers incident
To such a vaine ambition, into which
Hee's flatter'd by his father: but upon
What ground, I doe not thinke the divell owne
A perfect knowledge: Sure he cannot thinke
There's power in his successe to make him popular,
And leade the multitude in their disorder
To wish an innovation first, then practise it.

Vitt. He saith it is his right,

Pole. But where's the testimony?
Hell on these darke devises. Well, let's be
Like valiant Souldiers in the Rere, that dare
Goe on, whilst the front stands to be their bulwarke:
But breaches made therein to shew them danger,
In flight they put their safety. Let's observe,
And adde more to our knowledge; then resolve:
He that persues an act that is attended
With doubtfull issues, for the means had need
Of policy and force to make it speed. *Exeunt.*

Act. 5. First Scene. The Scene the Grove.

Corvino and Nerha.

Corv. **T**His preparation of your high resolves
I must allow with wonder: sure you had
Some revelation of the weighty secret;
Or else instinct hath taught your knowledge more
Then a weake judgement could conclude from doubts;
And those bare circumstances I have us'd
T' instruct you by.

Not. But if *Ferrara* must
Owne me her Duke, what progresse yet is order'd

For

The Unfortunate Mother.

For my establishment: great actions ought not
Want equall meanes: and sure my single force
May not encounter such an opposition
As I shall meet. To challenge it my right
And not maintaine it, renders me the lawes:
I would not pay my life for a distracted
Unwarrantable action. If it may
Be pleaded or with force, or testimony,
I am above all feares. *Corv.* I have a faction
Which with your party will make up a power
Of strength enough: but there is no such need.
Melissa joyn'd unto you will be more
Than any numerous Army of resolv'd
And faithfull spirits: she alone shall cleere
All that is yet in mists.

Not. If you'l take from me
The scruples that I have about its lawfulnessse,
Ile court her to prevaile.

Corv. You may command her,
Confirm it with an Oath as y'are a Prince;
And as I hope the ends of my ambition
Will meet successe, you shall be satisfi'd.

Not. By all the vertuall powers that make an Oath
Sacred, I vow onely to wedde *Melissa*;
Provided it be lawfull. *Corv.* Then accept

My duty sir, that owes subjection
Duely to none but you. It is your birth-right
That shall preferre you 'fore this yong usurper;
And thus his knee to whom yours oft hath bended *Kneeles.*
Humbles it selfe for pardon, that my brest
So long conceal'd what should make many happy.

Not. I then am elder sonne to the late Duke!
And onely yours suppos'd: I must acknowledge
A large debt to you for my education,
Which answer'd my high birth. But can this have
Cleere confirmation?

Corv. As the brightest ayre
The Sun illumines.

Not. I am then a Prince,
And you my onely Subject:

For I know not
Who else will pay obedience to me. *Corv.*

The Vnfortunate Mother.

Corv. All Will follow my example; for the rumour
As it growes bigger will incense the multitude:
From whom your fortunes and deserts have won
Both love and admiration. Fury then
Runnes them into a lumpe, or monstrous forme
With many heads, that carry their mad body
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That which you call religion, we but forme?

Not. You have instructed me: all other vertues
Depend on Iustice; she alone is perfect
Without addition in her selfe. A Prince
Cannot deserv'dly weare the royall title,
That orders not it, nor is order'd by it.
Justice with tyranny may be allow'd

H

Rather

The Vnfortunate Mother.

Rather than partiality, for that
Emboldens sin; the other makes it feare,
If this day I should not be iust (the first
Of my uncertaine government) a blessing
Would not preserve it ; for the bad example
Would teach bad subjects (such as thou) to be
Presumptuous in their errorrs.

Cor. What proceeding Intends this ambage ?

Not. Such a sin as thine
Is not allow'd the plea of an excuse.
Then since thou stand'st convicted by thy selfe,
I thus pronounce thy sentence: thou shalt dye.

Corv. Your selfe is not immortall Prince.

Not. By th' hand Of Justice.

Cor. Who's the executioner ?

Not. Thy selfe, I have no other to command.
Doe't with that instrument.

Cor. 'Tis a command } *Throwes him his*
Becomes a Prince ; and chiefly such a one } *Dagger,*
As makes it scruple to preserve his rayser,
Or to connive at a slight petty sin ;
Whose execution hath confirm'd his title :
'Tis a lesse sin to kill thee than my selfe.

Not. Honour must yeeld then to necessity :
Ile doe't my selfe. My sword that hath bin iust } *Drawes,*
In war, in Peace shall be so. Therefore pray ;
And if the apprehension of thy death
Presents thy guilty conscience with an horror,
Meete it with holy thoughts, that thy repentance
May beare thy best part upwards. I am loath
To kill thy soule.

Corv. What strange conceits are these
Transport your reason from its use ? pray kill me,
And when y' have done it, call my silent ashes
To tell the people how you are their Prince.
What then shall give my cold tongue motion
To iustifie your right ?

Not. Iust Hevens want not
Miraculous meanes. My Justice is too slow,

And

The Unfortunate Mother

And flies with lazie wings. Therefore be faddaine;
I cannot give thy preparations
A longer time.

Cor. Put up your sword, and take *Thrones backe*
Your Hang-mans toole agen. Put up I say, -- *The Dagger.*
And call your duty backe. Son I have plaid
My trialls into danger, heare the reason.
Observing in thee haughtinesse of spirit,
Forward to noble action, that was alwaies
Attended with successe, I fear'd ambition
Might tempt thy vertue, therefore order'd this
To prove its truth.

Not. You cannot trifle me
Into new error. I have shaken off
That loose and vulgar out-side I was drest in
By ignorance; but now I know my selfe
To be a Prince: 'Tis I that have discover'd
Ambition in thee, and thy practises;
To make thy daughter Dutchesse. But I play
Too much with Justice. Take thy punishment
For murder.

Offers to kill him.

2 Scene. Enter

Spu. 'Tis not yet but in attempt.

Spurio. draws.

Corv. Y' have sav'd my life. *Exit.*

Nnt. Why dost thou interpose?

Rash man, I doe command thee fetch him backe,
And be his executioner. Art fixt?

Obeys thy Prince with motion, or I'le turne
My rage on thee.

Spu. What madnesse hath possesst thee?

Not. I'me like to have good subjects, I must beate them
Into obedience: thinke not on defence
For that's as vaine as if with nothing arm'd
But empty aire, thou mett'st a Thunder-bolt.
A sword thus order'd by the hand of Majesty
Will make its way.

Spu. Traytor call backe that breath, *Fight.*
Which as it doth divide the circling ayre,
Poysons it more than fenns from whence the Sun
Exhales infectious vapours.

Not. Dar'st resist

The Unfortunate Mother.

Thy Soveraignes Will and power?

Spn. Disloyall villaine,

Thy words have made the cause inspire such valour

Into my hand and sword, such a just rage *Fight.*

To punish thee ----

Not. It hath a point, I feele it;

My royall blood doth waite.

Spn. 'Tis course and sordid.

Not. I faile not yet, my spirits still have force

I thinke that reacht you *Fight.*

Spn. That reacht you agen.

The cause assures me victory.

Not. 'Tis enough,

W' are both prov'd mortall. *Falls.*

Spn. Farewell dearest Master;

I dye thy loyall Champion. *Falls.* *3^d Scene. Ent.*

Inf. What's this horreur *Corv. Infelice*

Presents it selfe? Is't reall or illusive?

My *Spurio*, *Notha*, dead! let my soule flight

To meet yours in the peacefull shades of rest. *Sownes,*

Corv. Madam looke up, suffer not your faint spirits

Thus to retire unto their inmost cells:

Let them dilate their vigour, and at once

Make all your senses usefull. This sad accident

If well consider'd is not of such consequence,

That it should shew how much our passions can

Out doe our reason.

Inf. Give me more fresh ayre,

That I may draw it freely in't increase

My sighes; not to preserve the breath that keepes

The different parts united. What sad influence

Order'd this Tragick action? or what motives.

Could teach them to direct it to this end?

This most unnaturall end ----

Corv. Good Madam cease

Your exclamations; this may be apply'd

To better use from a consideration.

Your honour is secur'd, your shame prevented:

It was a mercy in high providence

Would you receive it so.

Inf.

The Vnfortunat Mother.

Inf. How weake is counsaile
To desperate frailty ? 'tis not your Art can
Perswade me to a comfort, being lost
To all that should revive it. In these two
Were lodg'd such a proportion of
My living joyes, in their cold earth remaines
All my hopes dead and frozen, unto which
They whilst they liv'd gave life. If there were vertue
In teares to warme your numb'd and bloodlesse limbes,
Into new life and motion, I would bath them
With a large flood : and when the springs were dry
Wish my selfe chang'd into a weeping marble
To be your monument.

Corv. Be not transported
Into such vaine expressions.

Inse. Vaine advise,
My griefes are like to Walls resisting Darts,
They'l beate thy counsailes backe to thy owne danger.

Corvino you were surely false, and taught
The youths this way to ruine. One more sigh
Will cracke my hearts weake cordage, and the vessell
Wanting its helpes, yeeld to the onely guidance
Of the distracted waves till it be swallow'd.
I thought my patience could have met with cheerefulnesse
Any crosse storme of fortune ; this hath kild it.
Forgive me Heaven, translate my penitent
And reconcil'd soule to a better mansion
Then that she's lodg'd in now. Divide my heart
You two. *Corvino* beare my dying blessings
Unto *Macario* --- Oh --- *Dyes.*

Corv. Will you then dye ?
And so prevent me ? for I did not meane
You should survive them, though I order'd not
Their deaths ; retaine your senses yet a little.
Live but to heare me, and I will relate
All that my knowledge ownes concerning it ;
And the new policies that I have built
Upon these happy accidents ; for hitherto
Fortune hath bin my Matchiaveile, and brought
Events about I never practis'd for.

The Unfortunate Mother.

Fidelio and *Cardente* are remov'd:
One stood betwixt my high ends, and the other
Begot continuall feare of a new danger
By her discovery. I shall be perfect now
In all things but revenge upon your scorne,
And the neglect of my deservings; will you not
Stay then to heare me? Farewell.

{ 4 Scene. Ent. Mac.

Mac. What's this horror?

{ Pole. Vitt. Bon. Ben.

The Scene presents a Tragedy; our Guard.
Our mother dead, and our two friends made livelesse
By one another? grieve seale up mine eyes
With an eternall darkenesse.

{ Am. Mel. Guard.

Am. Most unhappy

Kneeling by Spurio.

Amanda, in the losse of all thy withes;
Wee'le not be long divided, if my griefes
Meete not too stubborne and perverse resistance
From the soft heart I gave to thee.

Mac. Remove

The bodies decently, and then support me:
My spirits faint. *Corvino* we would have
The best account you can of this sad businesse,
To which you cannot chuse but have relation,
Considering the persons and the manner;
Speake your best knowledge.

{ Exit Guard with
the Bodies, the
Ladies following

Corv. I have now no language
But teares to be interpreted, and they
Are characters of inward sorrow onely;
Cannot expresse more then their propper meaning,
And whence they take their forme. Sir I am lost
To all my hopes of being, they being gone
On which it did depend, my sonnes; in whom
I had a lasting name, and should have liv'd
Unto succeeding times: now it will vanish
Like Clouds dissolv'd, to be forgotten.

Mac. Know you

What were the motives to their difference,
That fir'd such anger in them?

Corv. The remembrance
Of that calls up more grieve. Your mother sir.
The inconsiderate youths interpreted

Her

The Vnfortunate Mother.

Her favours to be love, and rivalling
Each other in desire, their passions met
By fury, joyn'd together, and begot
This sad effect: which when she understood,
And saw the dire events that had proceeded
From her so cleere intentions through mistaking,
Compassion broke her heart. This sir is all
My sad soule knowes.

Mac. I would it ne're had bin,
Or I to know it.

Corv. Shortly I shall pay
Nature her last debt, for my weakened age
Cannot resist these killing sorrowes long.
And my poore services desire your griefe
Not to be deafe to one request; that is,
You'd take my daughter to your care, and be
A father to her: or

Mac. We will respect her.

Pole. My information sir was truth. There is
More mistery to be unfoulded yet;
Times daughter will appeare, although she blush
To shew her nakednesse.

Card. Oh a Confessor.

*5 Scene. Enter Fidelio
and Cardente.*

Fid. Confesse who 'twas that order'd this vile practise,
Or my just anger shall allay it selfe
With that infected blood thou hast, before
The poyson workes more.

Card. It was Lord *Corvino*.

Mac. What's that?

Fid. She would have given poison to me,
Of which her selfe had tane before: but providence
Order'd it that my jealousie deferr'd it,
'Till it appear'd to worke on her with violence:
And so I was preserv'd.

Card. But I am pepper'd;
There's something in my conscience.

Mac. Utter it,

'Twill make thy peace with heaven; what is't *Cardente*?

Card. *Spurio*, and *Notho* were your naturall brothers,
Got by your father, on your mother sir.

In

The Unfortunate Mother.

In his first Dutchesse dayes she being barren,
I and *Corvino* had the secret carriage
Of all the businesse. He hath poison'd me.
I never shall love Philters more.

Mac. Corvino,

Here's a discovery renders you so vile,
That new suspicions spring from't: Neither can we
Trust our owne safety where a murderer
Sits neere our favour. Tortures therefore shall
Force from you what they can.

Cor. Your Justice might

Be temper'd with more mercy, and from reason,
Since the great secret is reveal'd which I
Kept guarded with my best resolves, as being
The Closet of your mothers honour, now
I will stand up and Justifie my actions.
First for the death of your unlawfull brothers:
'Twas accidentall, not by me determin'd.
And hath secur'd your state that might have suffer'd
A great disturbance by the knowledge of it:
Which by your Mothers and *Cardentes* death
Had found prevention being then restrain'd
Onely to me. For you *Fidelio*,
You intercepted all my studied meanes
Vnto my daughters honour. But intents
Proceeding not to act may challenge pardon.
What tortures then doe I deserve?

Mac. Just death. *Fid.* That sentence kills me too. *Melissa!*

Mac. Take him away; provide for's execution.

This day Ile see it done; 'twill set more fairely.
Lust and ambition are two meanes of evils,
That practis'd by their owners make them divells.

FINIS.

